

## **H.B. 5600**

**Government Administration and Elections Committee  
Testimony – January 28, 2012**

**Luther Weeks  
Luther@CTVotersCount.org  
334 Hollister Way West, Glastonbury, CT 06033**

**Chairs and members of the Committee, my name is Luther Weeks, Executive Director of CTVotersCount and a Certified Moderator, here to address HB 5600.**

**I fully support requiring towns to provide Internet access to all Registrars of Voters. (It would seem a necessity for registrars to efficiently search for critical information to update or review voter rolls and many other aspects of their duties. It is past time when towns should provide Internet access to practically all those who regularly work in town hall.)**

**I fully support requiring the posting of voter ID requirement's in polling places. In addition, mandatory posting of a list of registered write-ins should be required. After every election we hear complaints and stories of voters being told there are no such candidates, by uninformed poll workers and by some, perhaps, intent on discouraging write-ins. (Posting such lists would serve candidates and the public. It would all but eliminate associated complaints. Currently officials are prohibited from posting lists of write-in candidates.)**

**Lines 23 to 30, to this non-lawyer, are ambiguous, too broad in some areas, and too narrow in others.**

- **What constitutes a written declaration, instruction, and opinion needs to be clarified. Is it anything written by a member of the Secretary's staff? Would any item in a newsletter apply? Would an email suffice? To what extent would it apply to items created by previous administrations? How would new registrars, town clerks, candidates, and the public know of applicable items?**

**Applicable items should be required to be clearly identified within their text as falling under this statute, posted to easily identified sections of the Secretary's web site, and all be subject to express continuation by later administrations.**

- **Lines 14 to 22 include regulations, yet regulations are omitted from the enforcement provisions. Two recent SEEC Directors have given contradictory opinions on enforceability of regulations. It would serve to have that ambiguity resolved in the law.**
- **Enforcement is limited to registrars and town clerks. That would seem to preclude the enforcement of items the responsibility of other officials such as poll workers, moderators, and head moderators, who have election and recanvass responsibilities, some of which are independent of registrars and town clerks.**
- **I do wish that many such items were enforceable, yet I am concerned that very open-ended powers, could, under some future Secretary of the State, result in arbitrary and vote suppressing, directives. (For example: The heavy paper voter registration requirements in Ohio in 2004; and the recent reduction in early voting in Ohio, accompanied by a biased attempt to reduce early voting extensively in areas expected to vote against the party of the Secretary of State.)**

**In Summary: I would welcome some of these changes in the law. There is a need for enforceability when the Secretary fills in gaps in the law with procedures, or must respond to unanticipated emergency situations. (e.g.: The long check-in lines seen in West Hartford in Nov 2012; and the unaddressed inaccurate official results in Bridgeport in 2010.) The scope of authority should be limited, with clear delineation of enforceable items that are publicly accessible and transparent to all.**

**Thank you.**